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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED



Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 77, 1724 Central Avenue
Estherville, Iowa 51334-0077
(800) 225-4532 or (712) 362-7870
Fax: (712) 362-2819 / E-mail: ilec@ilec.org
<http://www.ilec.org>

February 22, 2002

Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

RE: Proceeding # 01-348
Comments of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative

82-P26332

01-348

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APR 4 9 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

In 1995, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative began offering DIRECTV to help fill the needs of the rural customer-owners in Northwest Iowa by providing high-quality television programming to those citizens who did not have access to multi-channel programming. Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative (ILEC) currently provides DIRECTV programming to over 6,500 homes, in an eight (8) county area in rural Iowa consisting of 45,500 homes. Today, over six years later, approximately 54% of the homes in our service territory still do not have access to digital cable and rely exclusively on satellite technology for the delivery of digital programming.

Our Cooperative's founding principles are based on the belief that rural Americans are entitled to the same benefits and advantages as those enjoyed in the urban markets. Rural America is entitled to emerging telecommunication choices and opportunities; one (1) source of programming in rural American cannot offer those choices or opportunities to the rural consumer. Because ILEC believes the proposed merger between EchoStar and DIRECTV will create a satellite monopoly in rural America, ILEC strongly opposes this merger based on the following concerns:

- Although EchoStar has "suggested" a national pricing plan that would guarantee rural Americans receive the same competitive prices as in urban markets, a flat rate plan across the United States does not keep prices continuously in check as compared to real competition between competitors.
- Beyond price, the proposed merger would give EchoStar and the "Dish" the market power with programmers to negotiate only the prices Mr. Ergen is willing to pay and the programmers either agree or are ignored. Rural Americans will have access only to the programming EchoStar chooses to offer while public interest is ignored.

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Honorable Michael Powell

Page Two

February 22, 2002

RE: Proceeding # 01-348

Comments of Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative

- Quality and service go hand in hand with competition. In our Cooperative's DIRECTV service territory, the local cable programming quality and selection has improved over the last few years in an effort to directly compete with the digital satellite service.
- At this time, both DIRECTV and EchoStar offer High Speed Internet services through a satellite system. If the proposed merger were approved, EchoStar would control nearly all of the nation's satellite broadband Internet services. This proposed merger has already had profound effects on the expansion to Ka-band and other high-speed Internet technologies for the future by limiting competitors.
- EchoStar and DIRECTV claim the combined spectrum of the two (2) satellite companies will enable an expansion of local-into-local channels to more markets. However, by using existing capacity, both DIRECTV and EchoStar could expand local carriage to the top 110 designated market areas (DMA). Mr. Ergen has stated that even if the merger goes through he does not plan to expand local-into-local service beyond the top one hundred (100) markets out of 210 total DMA markets in the nation. Ninety-five percent (95%) of ILEC's customers are far below the top one hundred (100) markets such as Sioux City, Iowa (#144) and Mankato, Minnesota (#196).

Mr. Chairman, I hope that you share our many concerns on the effects the proposed merger between EchoStar and DIRECTV would have on the rural consumer. Because the merger between EchoStar and DIRECTV would not be in the best interest of consumers, I strongly recommend that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) not support any merger that would leave over 10 million rural consumers with fewer choices, today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Terry L. Bruns, CPA

Executive Vice President/General Manager

Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative

1724 Central Avenue, P.O. Box 77

Estherville, IA 51334-0077

712-362-7870 ext. 225

Electronically submitted February 22, 2002 – Confirmation #2002222158691

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L. R. Chapman
18 Frontenac Estates Dr.
St. Louis, Mo. 63131
February 21, 2002

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APR 9 2002

01-348

Mr. Michael K. Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell,

It's interesting to me that so many Congressmen are objecting to the Echo Star/Direct TV deal because of potential price gouging in rural areas from such a combination. Yet, no Congressman seems to care that we have that today with the monopoly enjoyed by the various cable companies throughout the country.

In truth cities across the country can do little but renew cable franchises for very long periods because the public does insist on access. But the cities have so little power. They are lucky to get some service quality upgrades and the like when doing so---but can do absolutely nothing with respect to pricing. If my experience is representative, and I believe it is, then the cable companies are guilty of price gouging now in their own self interest.

Allow me to share my experience and make a suggestion for improvement. I enclose copies of my Charter Communications bill for the end of 1999 in the amount of \$33.02 for Basic and Extended Service and the one I just received for the same services in the amount of \$48.51. [This new rate, incidentally went into effect in Dec. 2001.] So in just three years my cable bill for the same services has been raised by 47%!! And yet, we all know that the cost of living index has increased by less than 10% over the same time period. I consider that unfettered, price gouging by a monopoly!

Now I'm told we have more channels to watch but they are of no interest to me and I couldn't tell anyone what they are. I'm sure some programming costs have gone up for the cable companies, but I very much doubt they have gone up anywhere close to 47% across the board. In my opinion the cable companies, at least Charter, are simply using their unmitigated, monopolist pricing power to increase their cash flow and operating earnings as they wish to satisfy shareholders--in particular controlling shareholders such as Allen, the Microsoft billionaire, in Charter's case. Also, please refer to a copy of an article in a recent Wall Street Journal enclosed. I had no idea that cable companies enjoyed 35 to 45% of revenues as operating profit. I spent my entire career in business and my last 10 as a CEO before I retired. I never witnessed such operating profit margins in any business with which I was associated and doubt that there are few companies that can compare.

I understand you are a free/open markets kind of guy. And fundamentally, I agree with you--but I was always in a business where there was significant competition and the market dictated pricing. When that is not the case, and only one company can provide a product or service in a given territory, I believe that legislation or regulation is required with respect to pricing in fairness to the consumer while still allowing a company to earn a reasonable margin and return on invested capital.

With respect to cable companies, I have a suggestion. The FCC should establish a "fair" base price for "basic cable" in all territories across the country to provide a fair return on existing invested capital, but not to cover new investment intended to provide new services which should stand on their own and are a normal business risk issue in anticipation of future earnings for most companies, and should, in turn, be subject to future income and earnings based on future sales of such services. The "basic cable" package should

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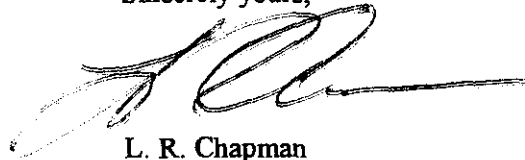
provide 8 to 10 channels only. They would be the local 4 or 5 broadcasters plus 4 to 5 routinely watched cable channels such as CNN, ESPN, etc. Beyond that, then, the consumer could buy additional channels one at a time. Each would be priced on what the market would bear. Perhaps as little as 25 cents per month or as much as \$5.00 per month---or again, whatever the market would bear. The key is to let the market dictate price based on the value as perceived by the consumer--- and not let the cable companies simply add channels as they choose and then charge the consumer what ever they wish. This would also address the issue of how much the companies that provide programming charge since they, too, would be subject to market forces. Cable companies would object to administrative costs, but in this day and age of computers [technology] I don't believe that would be material---and I daresay people could sign up for channels or stop service via a touch tone phone or over the Internet or whatever at little cost to the cable companies.

It seems to me, Chairman Powell, that such an approach would be consistent with your belief that the marketplace should dictate choice and price but with nominal regulation on the "basic cable" package to recognize we are dealing with monopolies.

The only other hope is that satellite service can truly become competitive and a viable alternative. Today that is not the case vis a vis cable with the limitation that multiple receivers cannot get different channels from one dish. In that respect, I personally would support the Echo Star acquisition of Direct TV to give them the scale and resources to overcome this deficiency and become a true competitor to cable. And it seems to me the FCC could establish a covenant in such a deal that would assure that rural areas [without access to cable] would not be gouged but priced consistently with their urban counterparts.

Thank you for listening---I can only hope you will give this matter your attention.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "L. R. Chapman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

L. R. Chapman

c/c: Members of Congress

J2
C3
03
4
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53
8



941 CHARTER COMMONS
TOWN & COUNTRY MO 63017-060941

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|||||

L R CHAPMAN
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000-02-02-C-C



PO BOX 790250
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|||||

10314 616109 01 7 3 004851 63



ACCOUNT NUMBER	BILLED FROM	BILLED TO	DATE DUE	INCLUDES PAYMENTS RECEIVED BY
10314-616109-01-7	2/16/02	3/15/02	NONE DUE	2/11/02

FOR- 18 FRONTENAC DR

1/15	BEGINNING BALANCE	48.50
2/01	PAYMENT-THANK YOU	48.50-
2/16- 3/15	BASIC SVC	13.67
2/16- 3/15	EXPANDED SERVICE	32.18
2/16- 3/15	1 ADD'L. OUTLET	.00
2/16- 3/15	FRANCHISE FEE	2.62
2/16- 3/15	FCC ADMIN FEE	.04

2/15	BALANCE MONTH END	48.51
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10313-116109-01-4	12/16/98	1/15/99	01/02/99	12/08/98

FOR- 18 FRONTENAC DR

11/15	BEGINNING BALANCE	33.02
12/03	PAYMENT	33.02-
12/16- 1/15	BASIC SVC TIER	11.71
12/16- 1/15	EXPANDED SERVICE	19.63
12/16- 1/15	FRANCHISE FEE	1.65
12/16- 1/15	FCC ADMIN FEE	.03

12/15	BALANCE DUE	33.02
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Cable Industry Mergers? Let's Count the Ways

HEARD

ON THE

STREET

By David M. Weis and
And Deborah Solomon

Staff reporters of the New York Times

Stay tuned for more on this story

Let's count the ways the cable industry is getting bigger

Consolidation is a difficult word to use in the

purchase of AT&T Broadband from AOL last

month has set off a wave of speculation

in the industry that consolidation is the

industry's only way to survive. But

consolidation is not a new word. Regulators

AT&T, Comcast, and other cable subscribers

will not be happy to see the industry

in the hands of a few large companies.

With size comes power, and the industry

one of the most powerful in the country

in what could be a very real danger

of consolidation. But the industry

is not alone in this. Other industries

are also consolidating. The cable

ling scale in the cable business, said

John Tronsdale, head of the mergers and

acquisitions media group at Merrill

Lynch. "I think more consolidation is

likely as other cable players feel pressure

to stay on a level playing field."

Several of the nation's largest cable

companies are openly pondering deals or

customer swaps in the coming months. Topping

the list are the "mid-tier" companies: Adel

phia Communications, Cox Communications,

Cablevision Systems and Charter

Communications. While big enough to stand

on their own, the companies are getting

dwarfed by AT&T-Comcast and AOL Time

Warner, the industry leaders.

The pressure for consolidation stems

from broader changes in the media world.

Programmers like Walt Disney and Vi

com, which supply cable companies with

channels, are using their increasing power

to charge cable companies higher fees for

programs. Cable companies need equal

Please Turn to Page C2, Column 3

NOTICE TO READERS

U.S. stock and bond markets were closed yesterday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The daily U.S. stock and mutual-fund tables don't appear today.

Tues 1/22/02

HEARD

ON THE

STREET

Continued From Page C1

reach, and influence as "gatekeepers" to the public, to resist the cost increases.

At the same time, satellite-television companies continue to lure away cable customers, a trend likely to accelerate if EchoStar Communications gets regulatory approval to buy Hughes Electronics to create a satellite colossus. The \$25.8 billion deal was announced in October.

"The fear coming from competition in the satellite industry and the fact that the content guys are getting bigger is going to drive the rest of the cable players to get economies of scale," says James Easterlin, an analyst with Oak Value Capital Management. Oak Value owns shares of Charter Communications, the cable company controlled by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen.

Granted, cable companies are notoriously difficult to merge. Most are family-owned or controlled by a large shareholder and are loath to dilute their voting and economic stakes. They also are virtual monopolies, with little or no competition from other cable companies in their markets. Cable companies remain rich franchises, with operating earnings usually reaching between 35% to 45% of revenue and heady stock prices that have held firm through the recent market downturn. While the AT&T-Comcast deal shows the advantage of size, most operators are under little day-to-day pressure to sell.

Family control is a complicating factor, but not an immediate impediment to further consolidation, says Paul J. Taubman, who heads Morgan Stanley's media and communications mergers and acquisition practice. Family ownership presents a different set of challenges in crafting a deal.

Consider Adelphia, the nation's No. 6 cable company, and its owner, like Comcast, in Philadelphia, is controlled by the Rigas family, who has refused to sell to a rival industry company. In late 2001, Adelphia Chief Financial Officer Timothy J. Rigas made a dramatic statement. According to people attending Mr. Rigas' presentation of a plan screen and displayed a series of maps showing Adelphia's huge customer reach. If it were combined with AOL Time Warner and AT&T-Comcast.

"Since you're all wondering anyway, Mr. Rigas said, 'I decided to show you the possible combinations.'"

Adelphia also has been prettying up its balance sheet—shedding assets and paying down debt. Some investors see that as a sign the company wants to do a deal. On Jan. 14, Adelphia completed the spinoff of Adelphia Business Solutions, a telecommunications business in which it has a 79% stake, and two days later, it raised more than \$1.5 billion in stock offerings to help pay down debt. The company raised about \$1 billion in similar offerings last year. Adelphia didn't return calls seeking comment.

Whether Adelphia will do a deal remains to be seen, but industry observers say the company would fit best inside Time Warner Cable, the cable unit of AOL Time Warner. Such a deal would boost Adelphia from the No. 6 to the No. 2 spot but, perhaps more importantly, it would complement the

current operations. Both cable companies have large systems in the Northeast, Florida and the Carolinas. Time Warner declined to comment.

Cox is another company in the merger crosshairs. The nation's No. 3 cable company has always deflected talk of a deal and Chief Executive James Hanks has said repeatedly that the company isn't a seller. The Atlanta company is firmly controlled by Cox Industries, a family-owned concern which owns a 65% economic stake and a 50% control in Cox Communications.

Yet Cox surprised the industry last year by entering the bidding war for AT&T Broadband. The bid would have left Cox with less than 25% of the combined company, signaling the company's willingness to sell under the right terms and management conditions. Possible combinations include Charter, AOL, Adelphia and even the new AT&T-Comcast, though the latter would likely encounter regulatory hurdles.

With AT&T-Cox approved, they're willing to let the minority owners, and one person close to the AT&T talks, what's a big concession.

Cox declined to comment. Cablevision also is the subject of growing takeover talk. The Buffalo, N.Y., company controls three million cable TV customers in New York, a highly lucrative market that could attract suitors from AOL, which also provides service in the area. AOL has hinted repeatedly that it would like to buy the company under the right terms.

According to people close to the company, Cablevision CEO James Dolan, 45 years old, told investors recently that the company would consider an offer if it exceeded the value the company could achieve under current management. The Dolan family controls Cablevision with a 76% voting stake through its ownership of all 42 million shares of Class B shares. It also has a 50% economic stake. Cablevision declined comment.

"Still, people close to the company say Mr. Dolan is not likely to do a deal. The company has managed to keep its programming costs down and has achieved scale in the New York market."

Charter Communications is also the subject of deal talk. The decision rests with Mr. Allen, who has a 92% voting and 88% economic stake.

People close to Mr. Allen say he isn't a likely candidate to remain involved in the company. He has spent the past two years growing from one million customers to about seven million subscribers, and Mr. Allen is very content to put more money in the cable business, says a person familiar with the situation.

But more than just growing bigger, this person says, Mr. Allen wants to "gain control of the markets, either through buying or trading the company, which has systems across the U.S. with a concentration in the Midwest and South would fit nicely with Cox or Adelphia," say analysts. Charter recently conducted a \$900 million bond offering, which it plans to use to pay down debt.

Dave Anderson, a Charter spokesman, says the company is in this for the long haul. "While the company is interested in building up its cable business, it's not our ambition to get larger for the sake of getting larger," says Mr. Anderson. Instead, the company is likely to buy assets that can complement its current cable systems.



Area Chamber of Commerce

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February 20, 2002

Mr. Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

02-P26334

01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

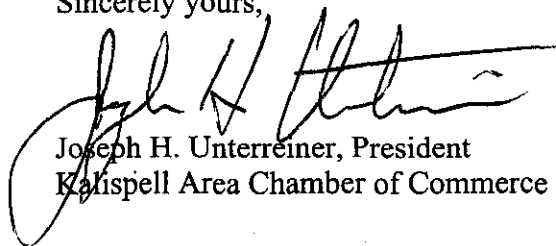
Economic development in Montana in the 21st century means working hard to use every resource at our disposal to help existing businesses grow and encourage new businesses to make Montana their home.

An important resource in that endeavor is broadband internet access. As you know, rural areas have some limitations in that regard that require creative solutions that may not be necessary in more urban markets. Because major portions of our state and even parts of our larger communities like Kalispell are outside the current service area for traditional, fiber or cable based broadband providers, their e-commerce potential relies on their ability to access reliable, affordable broadband access.

I am encouraged by the promise of exactly this kind of increased access that may result from the merger of DirecTV and EchoStar (Docket #01-348). By eliminating the duplication of a large amount of television programming that takes up valuable satellite spectrum, the merged company will be able to significantly add to its current capability to provide the reliable, cost effective broadband internet capability rural communities like ours need to be able to compete in the new economy.

I hope you will consider these benefits as you weigh the pros and cons of this important merger.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph H. Unterreiner, President
Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce

CC: The Honorable Max Baucus

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02P26329

01-348

4 March 2002

Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
Reference: 01-348
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing in support of the merger between EHOSTAR Communications and Hughes Electronics Corporation.

There are in my opinion several advantages this merger could provide: 1) More programming choices; 2) Access to both rural and urban areas in America; and 3) Lower costs to the consumer.

Again, there are numerous advantages to this merger, all of which are consumer friendly. Please support this merger.

Sincerely,



Susan Severino
1317 Merle Hay Road
Des Moines, IA 50311

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Bob Brunkhorst
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Twenty-Second District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3221
e-mail - bob.brunkhorst@legis.state.ia.us



House of Representatives
State of Iowa
Seventy-Ninth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

COMMITTEES
Appropriations, *Vice Chair*
Education
Environmental Protection
Human Resources

APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
Education

HOME ADDRESS
419 3rd Avenue SW
Waverly, Iowa 50677
Home: (319) 352-0065

March 6, 2002

Michael K. Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
Reference: 01-348
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

01-348
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APR 4 9 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Mr. Powell:

I am writing you to express my concern and support regarding the merger between ECHOSTAR and Hughes Electronics Corporation.

There are in my opinion several advantages this merger could provide over the current system.

1. Provide more programming choices.
2. Provide access not only to urban but also to rural America.
3. Consumers would enjoy lower costs.

I urge you to consider the numerous advantages this merger would bring forth. All of which are consumer friendly. Please, as I do, give your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

Bob Brunkhorst, FLMI, ACS, AIAA
State Representative

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ORIGINAL

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-1196
401-222-2080

LINCOLN ALMOND
GOVERNOR

December 26, 2001

Mr. Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Powell:

I am writing to urge your department to give due consideration to the proposed merger between Echostar Communications Corporation and Hughes Electronics Corporation (DIRECTV).

Proponents of the merger believe that it would represent the next step in the development of healthy competition between the cable and satellite industries. It could also hasten the availability of Internet broadband access for rural consumers - something that policymakers at all levels believe would be positive for the economy.

Opponents of the merger raise antitrust issues and these should be carefully considered. The cable industry, however, has a monopoly presence in many areas.

The people of Rhode Island have benefited from the introduction of satellite service and will continue to benefit from even more robust competition between the cable and satellite industries. It is my hope your department will promptly and thoroughly review this merger and give it every consideration.

Sincerely,

Lincoln Almond

02-26323

01-348

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

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Prehlad S. Vachher, M.D.

42814 Oatyer Ct.
Ashburn, VA 20148
703-726-0334
FAX 703-726-0335

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December 17, 2001

Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communication Commission
Washington, D.C.

02-26322

01-348

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APR 9 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Mr. Powell:

I understand that Dish Network (Echostar) is in the process of acquiring Direct TV from General Motors Corp. I am of the opinion that the acquisition by Dish Network would create a monopoly in the satellite TV market. The result of this would be damaging to American consumers resulting in increased charges, poor performance, and poor treatment of consumers.

I recommend that you do not approve or recommend such an acquisition by Dish Network.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Prehlad S. Vachher, M.D.

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BLACK STAR COMMUNICATIONS

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APR 29 2002

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Tracy Jenkins
Vice President &
General Manager

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Fax 303.388.3523
www.colourstv.org

February 4, 2002

The Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

01-348

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Black Star Communications is submitting this letter in support of the merger between EchoStar Communications Corporation and Hughes Electronics' Direct TV. Black Star Communications is a non-profit organization that created CoLours TV, a multicultural and multi-ethnic programming network, which features positive images of people of color.

Black Star Communications was founded in Denver, Colorado by a cross section of civil rights and non-profit organizations such as the NAACP, the Urban League, Black United Fund of Colorado, The Greater Metro Denver Ministerial Alliance, and the Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce. We created CoLours TV for the purpose of building bridges across the cultural divide. Our programming features the faces and issues of African, Asian, Latin, and Native American people. Because of EchoStar, our programming is seen in 3.2 million households across the United States.

As you know, the merger of these two companies would eliminate the duplication of networks carried by both EchoStar and Direct TV. The result of this situation would allow for the launch of other non-profit and diverse programming networks.

EchoStar has a record of accomplishment for carrying ethnically diverse channels and we applaud their efforts to add more when space becomes available. Therefore, we think this merger would ultimately be a benefit to an ethnically diverse television audience in the United States.

Sincerely,


Tracy Jenkins
Vice President & General Manager

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BILL OWENS
GOVERNOR

136 STATE CAPITOL BUILDING
DENVER, COLORADO 80203

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FAX 303-866-2003

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APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

82-226319

01-348

Mr. Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Powell:

The pending merger of EchoStar and DirecTV has the potential to revolutionize the country's communications market. I write to ask for your commitment to ensure the FCC's careful consideration and expeditious review of the many benefits this merger would bring America's consumers.

I believe this merger is in the best interests of consumers because it would open up a new level of competition between satellite and cable within the pay-TV market. Consumers would receive the benefits of new programming, expanded coverage of local channels, and the delivery of high-speed Internet access and other broadband services via satellite.

Furthermore, the proposed merger has the potential to help bridge the so-called "digital divide" between urban and rural residents. The combined company will be able to provide much-needed high-speed satellite Internet and broadband services to rural America.

In view of its potential benefits to consumers and technological innovation, it is my sincere hope that your agency will grant this pending merger a fair hearing and timely approval.

Sincerely,

Bill Owens.

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CAPITOL OFFICE
State Capitol
201 West Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65101-6806
Tele: 573-751-2108



ORIGINAL

HOME ADDRESS
P.O. Box 104
Lake Spring, MO 65532
573-729-2572

02-726318

01-348

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

FRANK BARNITZ
State Representative
District 150

February 28, 2002

Mr. Michael K. Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, South West
Washington DC 20544

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APR 4 9 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Mr. Powell:

I respectfully request the assistance of the Federal Communications Commission in conducting an investigation of the proposed merger of EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics' DirecTV satellite services. This investigation should assess the potential impact on consumers. It is essential that the FCC undertake a thorough review of the proposal

The availability and pricing of communication services, especially in the rural market, may be negative. If the proposed merger is carried out, EchoStar Communication will control the nation's satellite television market and consumers could be adversely impacted.

I whole heartily request the serious consideration of the FCC in investigating this merger and await your decision.

Sincerely,

Frank A. Barnitz
Frank Barnitz
State Representative
District 150

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CLAIBORNE PARISH FARM BUREAU

"Voice of Agriculture"
HOMER, LOUISIANA 71040

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

February 18, 2002

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington DC 20554

RECE

Reference number is # 01-348

APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to encourage your support of the pending merger of EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics.

I believe that the new company will pave the way for greater competition with the cable companies who currently control 80% of the pay television households in the United States. This merger will not inhibit competition; rather it will provide an equal base in which the markets can compete.

The new company will also be able to reach additional markets because of the programming and administrative efficiencies realized by the new company. Direct broadcast satellite TV offered by the newly formed company will be able to provide interactive educational programs in many schools. High Speed Internet service would be available to many rural areas throughout the state. This company would be a viable competitor that could deliver more program choices and improved services at competitive prices.

I encourage you to review the facts and hope that you can support the merger.

Sincerely,

Jim Marsalis

Jim Marsalis, President
Claiborne Parish Farm Bureau

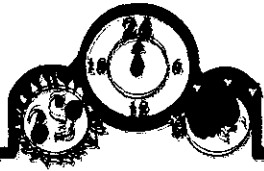
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HOMER, LA 71040

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02-226315



ORIGINAL

Ohio Association of Convenience Stores

January 15, 2002

01-348

REC

APR 29 2002

Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell:

The membership of the Ohio Association of Convenience Stores enthusiastically supports the proposed merger of satellite TV carriers EchoStar and DIRECTV and we hope you can do everything possible to see that this merger gets prompt approval from the FCC and Department of Justice.

As business people, we are enthused about the expanded opportunities that would come with the new company's ability to offer broadband services via satellite to every home in Ohio. Every household in our state --- from the urban neighborhoods of Cleveland to the farms of Southern Ohio ---- would have easy, affordable access to broadband technology. This would be a free market cure for the problems of the "Digital Divide" and a great opportunity for business and consumers, all without public expense.

The expanded technical capacity of the post-merger company would accelerate the competition EchoStar and DIRECTV have already brought to cable TV companies. In summary, we feel this merger is in the best interests of America and particularly good for Ohio. Your support would be most welcome.

Sincerely,

Josh Sanders
Executive Director
Ohio Association of Convenience Stores

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JERRY A. THOMAS, M.D.
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 12

ORIGINAL
SENATE
STATE OF LOUISIANA

02720317

February 22, 2002

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APR 4 9 2002

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

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TOLL FREE: (800) 259-6690
FAX: (985) 848-5824

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

- AGRICULTURE (VICE-CHAIRMAN)
- REVENUE & FISCAL AFFAIRS
- INSURANCE
- LOCAL & MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

01-348

Re: Docket #01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

The purpose of my letter is to state that I believe that the proposed merger between EchoStar and Hughes Electronics could bring unique and exciting benefits to our rural constituents.

The benefits to consumers will mean more programming choices and competitive pricing. This merger, if approved by the F.C.C. and D.O.J., will provide an excellent alternative to cable TV. Today cable TV controls nearly 80% of the pay television household market with little or no competition. Real competition will only keep rapidly growing cable prices down and will serve as an incentive for them to give the consumer better service.

The underserved rural areas will also benefit from the merger because of the potential use of interactive TV and broadband Internet access in schools and businesses. The cost to install cable in rural areas is very high, and Direct Broadcast Satellite TV is relatively inexpensive. The infrastructure for the merger is already in place.

Let us bridge the digital divide that exists between urban and rural communities. This merger is pro-consumer, pro-competition, and pro-economy. I urge you to review the facts and support the merger.

Best Regards,

Jerry Thomas
Jerry A. Thomas, M.D.

Louisiana State Senate- District 12

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M. J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.
GOVERNOR

ORIGINAL

02-24321

State of Louisiana

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Baton Rouge

70804-9004

POST OFFICE BOX 9004
(225) 342-7915

January 17, 2002

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01-348

RECEIVED

APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Support of Pending Merger of DIRECTV and EchoStar Satellite Systems

Dear Chairman Powell:

As Governor of Louisiana, I am writing in support of the proposed EchoStar/DIRECTV merger and ask that the matter get a thorough, fair and timely review on its merits.

Creation of a new satellite company with the size and technology to match cable TV's offerings in programming choices and high-speed Internet access would benefit our state's consumers and serve as a healthy competitive stimulus for the pay-TV market.

For those Louisiana communities already served by cable and satellite providers, the addition of satellite-delivered Internet services represents a competitive choice. For our rural residents that are not served by cable, satellite broadband would provide affordable access to the digital future.

In view of its benefits to consumers and support of the free market system, I look on the merger favorably. It is my hope that the FCC will approve it without unnecessary delay or unreasonable conditions.

Sincerely,

M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.

jw

c: Congressman W.J. "Billy" Tauzin

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02-P26333

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STATE OF LOUISIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
T. TAYLOR TOWNSEND
District 23
February 18, 2002

Insurance
House Executive Committee
Ways and Means
Legislative Audit Advisory Council
Joint Legislative Committee
on Capital Outlay

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APR 4 9 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D. C. 20554

01-348

Docket # 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to encourage you to support the pending merger between EchoStar and Direct TV. This merger will provide many benefits to most Americans.

The merger between EchoStar and Direct TV will bring virtual third line, similar to the bundled offerings of video and data by cable, into the homes that cable has deemed too expensive to serve. The merger creates economies of scale necessary to offer competitively priced, high-speed Internet access via satellite to my rural areas, especially businesses and school that do not have access to cable modem service or DSL.

The digital divide that exists beyond our inner cities, into rural areas of Louisiana will no longer exist with the merger of this new company. Many rural citizens do not receive local broadcast signals using an antenna, and are not served by cable. The merged companies will provide more programming choices, lower costs, and better customer service that what is currently available from cable companies.

For many rural Americans, this merger offers the most realistic chance of bringing an affordable high-speed Internet access service into their homes. I encourage you to review the facts and give it your approval.

Sincerely,

T. Taylor Townsend
Louisiana House of Representatives
District 23

TTT/mrj

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(800) 259-2118
Home: (337) 639-2341
Fax: (337) 639-4045

STATE OF LOUISIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HERMAN RAY HILL
District 32

March 4, 2002

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APR 9 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Vice Chairman, Agriculture
Natural Resources
Ways and Means
Joint Legislative Committee on Capital Outlay

Honorable Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S. W.
Washington, DC 20554

REF Docket: 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing this letter to urge you to support the merger between EchoStar and Hughes Electronics. This combined company could bring unique and exciting benefits to many people in our state.

A combined EchoStar and Hughes Electronics should provide the economies of scale and buying power to expand services provided to all markets. The Combined company will also be able to provide high-speed satellite Internet and broadband service with multilingual options at competitive prices. By having this improved service many in our community could overcome the barrier of access and this will benefit our young people and businesses.

It seems like there is a new and improved technology coming out each and every day. This merged company could provide the rural parts of Louisiana with competitively priced access to that ever changing technology and I hope you will seriously consider this matter.

Sincerely,

Herman Ray Hill
State Representative
District 32

HRH/cs

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Agriculture
Environment
Health and Welfare
Insurance

STATE OF LOUISIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MICHAEL G. "MIKE" STRAIN, DVM
District 74

March 4, 2002

Honorable Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington DC 20554
Ref Docket: 01-348

RECEIVED

APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

02-p26328
01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to encourage your favorable consideration of the pending merger of EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics. The new company will be an excellent competitor to cable companies, which control 80% of the pay television households. With this increase in competition, cable companies will be motivated to improve their own services at lower cost.

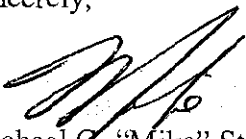
The new company would make a difference in many rural areas throughout our state that currently do not have access to high speed internet service. Direct Broadcast Satellite TV will be able to provide interactive TV educational programs in most of our schools and videos on demand. This will increase educational opportunities and enable more quality programming choices.

The merged company will also help to bridge the "digital divide" that exists between urban and rural residents. The merger will bring a virtual third line, similar to the bundled offerings of video and data by cable, into the homes that cable has deemed too expensive to serve.

By overcoming the barrier of access, homes and businesses and schools throughout the state of Louisiana will benefit economically, financially, and academically.

Please consider the facts and support this merger. It is pro-consumer, pro-competition, and would allow fast, affordable, broadband service into the homes of many rural resident across the state.

Sincerely,



Michael G. "Mike" Strain, DVM
Louisiana State Representative
District 74

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Vice Chairman, Education
Agriculture
Appropriations

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(800) 259-5294
Fax: (337) 948-0214

STATE OF LOUISIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CHARLES L. HUDSON
District 40

March 4, 2002

02726324

Honorable Michael Powell,
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RECEIVED

APR 9 2002

01-348

Ref Docket: 01-348

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell:

I firmly believe that the merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics would provide significant benefits to consumers throughout our state. Over the past 20-years, EchoStar Communications has demonstrated various industry firsts and this newly merged company would be able to continue improving service and quality programming to rural residents everywhere.

The company will be able to effectively compete in an environment against other dominant US cable companies. Currently consumers located in urban areas are offered a choice between cable television and satellite service; people in rural areas are not always fortunate to have a choice. Local-to-local broadcasting will be improved and offered to all markets and quality programming will be able to reach homes, businesses; and schools.

The digital divide that currently exists must be eliminated. High-speed Internet access would be provided through satellite to many rural areas that cable has deemed too expensive to install. This merger will help to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas.

EchoStar's nationwide pricing plan offers customers a fair package or options, including more programming choices, interactive services, and video on demand, at competitive prices.

I urge you to seriously consider the positive effect that this new company would have on our state and nation. Please support the merger favorable and enable all Americans to have the same opportunities and choices no matter where they live.

Sincerely,

Charles Hudson

Charles Hudson
State Representative, District 40

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